



Rafael established a foundation which today gives relief and support to his community



One scandal too many: British PM Boris Johnson resigns



Prime Minister Boris Johnson reads a statement outside 10 Downing Street, London, formally resigning as Conservative Party leader, in London, Thursday, July 7, 2022. Associated Press

By D. KIRKA, J. LAWLESS and S. HUI
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced his resignation Thursday amid a mass revolt by top members of his gov-

ernment, marking an end to three tumultuous years in power in which he brazenly bent and sometimes broke the rules of British politics.

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Marines from the U.S training in Aruba



Local companies can provide opportunities to people with intellectual disabilities



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Election officials face security challenges before midterms

By **CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY**

Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) —

Election officials preparing for the upcoming midterms face a myriad of threats, both foreign and domestic, as they look to protect voting systems and run a smooth election while fighting a wave of misinformation that has been undermining public confidence in U.S. elections.

The nation's top state election officials gathered Thursday for the start of their annual summer conference, with a long list of challenges that begins with securing their voting systems.

While a top concern heading into the 2020 presidential election was Russia or another hostile nation waging a disruptive cyberattack, the landscape has expanded to include ransomware, politically motivated hackers and insider threats. Over the last year, a small number of security breaches have been reported at local election offices in which authorities are investigating whether office staff improperly accessed or provided improper access to sensitive voting technology.

Jen Easterly, who leads the nation's cybersecurity agency, said Russia, China and North Korea remain "very dynamic and complex cyber threats" and



Jen Easterly, Director of Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, speaks during the summer conference of the National Association of Secretaries of State on July 7, 2022, in Baton Rouge, La., as Kyle Ardoin, Louisiana Secretary of State listens.
Associated Press

that criminal gangs pushing ransomware were also a concern. But she noted election security officials could not afford to prioritize one over the other.

"We can't just worry about one thing because if we focus too intently on one set of threats, we're very likely to miss them coming from another direction," Easterly told reporters, after a series of private meetings with state election officials.

The U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency has been conducting physical assessments for

state and local election officials, which includes site visits and reviews of security procedures such as video surveillance and access controls. Physical security has always been a concern but an onslaught of threats since 2020 targeting election officials have added urgency to the effort. State and local election officials have reported being harassed in person and receiving death threats over social media and text message.

"We're seeing an exodus of people in the field. And

some of it does relate to just the physical security threats that they're facing," said Kim Wyman, who leads election security efforts for the cybersecurity agency. "And what we're trying to do with this is give them tools to be able to deal with that."

The agency has also issued guidance on how to mitigate insider threats, which emphasizes the importance of chain of custody rules. The guidance also suggests the use of bipartisan teams when accessing sensitive equipment to

ensure voting systems are protected. State election officials have also been focused on boosting cybersecurity defenses at the local level, where staffing and resources are often limited. In Ohio, Secretary of State Frank LaRose recently announced a third wave of security requirements for the state's county election boards, which includes increased video surveillance for voting equipment and more comprehensive security reviews of county systems.

"It's constant vigilance," LaRose said Thursday. "The threat is constantly emerging. The threat is constantly changing. And so we're evolving with it and making sure that our guard is up." Election security became a national focus after the 2016 presidential election, when Russia probed state voter registration systems across the country looking for vulnerabilities.

In response, the Obama administration designated election systems as "critical infrastructure" — on par with the nation's banks, dams and nuclear power plants. This freed up resources and funds for election officials, and a concerted effort was made to improve communications and intelligence sharing between the federal government and the states. □



U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn speaks, as U.S. Reps., from left, Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., Ayanna Pressley, D-Mass., and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., listen, during a news conference at the Capitol in Washington, July 15, 2019.

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — A federal judge sentenced a former Trump supporter to three years of probation

and a \$7,000 fine for sending an email threatening to kill Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota and three other

Florida man sentenced in death threat to Minnesota Rep. Omar

congresswomen.

David George Hannon, 67, also must undergo mental and substance abuse treatment and have no contact with Omar or Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts and Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, according to a report in the Tampa Bay Times.

Hannon, who pleaded guilty in April to threatening a federal official, sent the email after the four Democratic lawmakers held a news conference in July 2019 in response to criticism from former President

Donald Trump, who said they should "go back" to the "crime-infested places" from which they came.

"He was doing that because Trump told him to," his daughter, Elizabeth Hannon Dillon, told the judge during the hearing on Wednesday. "He was a Trump supporter and now he regrets it." This threat was "heinous and inappropriate in every regard," U.S. District Judge Kathryn Kimball Mizelle said. "This sort of behavior has no place in our society." Sentencing guidelines called for about 10 months in prison, but

Mizelle noted that a probation officer recommended against prison time, along with Hannon's expressions of remorse, lack of prior trouble, his age and health problems. "I'm very, very sorry and very remorseful about my behavior that night," Hannon said as he stood before the judge, stooped and trembling. Hannon emailed Omar's campaign with a subject line that read: "Your Dead You Radical Muslim," writing that Omar should get more security or she and the other women would be "six feet under." □

IRS asks Treasury watchdog to probe Comey, McCabe tax audits

By **FATIMA HUSSEIN**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The IRS commissioner has asked the Treasury Department's internal watchdog to immediately review the circumstances surrounding intensive tax audits that targeted ex-FBI Director James Comey and former Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, frequent targets of Donald Trump's ire during his presidency.

IRS spokesperson Jodie Reynolds said Thursday the agency has officially referred the matter to the inspector general for tax administration after Commissioner Charles Rettig, who was nominated to the job by Trump and is a close ally of the former president, personally reached out.

Reynolds insisted it is "ludicrous and untrue to suggest that senior IRS officials somehow targeted specific individuals" for such audits. The New York Times reported Wednesday that the former FBI leaders were subjected to rare IRS audits of their tax returns. The newspaper said Comey was informed of the audit in 2019 and McCabe learned he was under scrutiny in 2021. Rettig, whose term is set to expire in November, faced blistering criticism from Democrats for helping to shield Trump's tax returns from the public.

Trump repeatedly attacked Comey and McCabe over



Former FBI Director James Comey speaks to reporters on Capitol Hill Washington, Dec. 17, 2018.
Associated Press

the FBI's Russia investigation that shadowed his presidency for years. Trump fired Comey in 2017 in the midst of that investigation, which ultimately was taken over by special counsel Robert Mueller, named to that job by Trump's Justice Department.

The FBI inquiry began in the summer of 2016, months before Trump was elected. The bureau had learned that a former Trump campaign aide had been saying, before it was publicly known, that Russia had dirt on Trump's Democratic rival for the White House, Hillary Clinton, in the form of stolen emails.

Those emails were hacked

from Democratic email accounts by Russian intelligence. They were released by the anti-secrecy group WikiLeaks before the election in what U.S. officials have said was an effort to harm Clinton's campaign and help Trump's. Trump repeatedly called the investigation a "witch hunt." A 2019 review by the Justice Department's inspector general knocked down multiple lines of attack against the Russia investigation, finding that officials properly opened the inquiry and that law enforcement leaders were not motivated by political bias. The watchdog did identify a number of problems in

the investigation, leading the FBI to take steps aimed at fixing some fundamental operations, such as applying for surveillance warrants and interacting with confidential sources.

McCabe was fired in March 2018 after the Justice Department's inspector general concluded he had authorized the release of information to a newspaper reporter and then misled internal investigators about his role in the leak. The termination by Jeff Sessions, Trump's attorney general at the time, came hours before McCabe was due to retire.

McCabe won back his full pension as part of a settle-

ment of his lawsuit arising from his firing. The settlement agreement vacated that decision, expunged from his personnel folder references to the firing and entitled McCabe, who joined the FBI in 1996, to his full pension.

According to the IRS website the audits the two men and their wives underwent are part of a program that randomly selects tax returns to examine tax compliance and improve the system.

McCabe, in comments on CNN, where he is a law enforcement analyst, described the two audits as a "coincidence that ... really is almost impossible statistically" and said they raised questions that should be answered. He said it was "appropriate for the IRS to do the responsible thing and look into it and determine whether or not something, you know, went awry in this program."

Comey said in a statement that he could not say whether anything improper happened, "but after learning how unusual this audit was and how badly Trump wanted to hurt me during that time, it made sense to try to figure it out." Asked Thursday whether Biden has confidence in Rettig, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre simply noted that his term is set to expire later this year. □

Texas governor authorizes state to return migrants to border

By **PAUL J. WEBER**

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas Gov. Greg Abbott on Thursday authorized state forces to apprehend and transport migrants to the U.S.-Mexico border, claiming the enforcement powers of federal agents and pushing the legal boundaries of the Republican's escalating efforts to curb the rising number of crossings.

The federal government is responsible for enforcement of immigration laws,

but for more than a year Texas has patrolled the border with an increasingly heavier hand. Abbott stopped short of authorizing Texas troopers and National Guard members — who he has already deployed to the border by the thousands — to take migrants across the ports of entry and into Mexico. That disappointed former Trump administration officials who for months have pressured Abbott to declare an "invasion" and order state

forces to forcibly take migrants out of the country. But the action is still a significant and untested expansion of the normal powers of the National Guard and state police, who until now have turned migrants over to Border Patrol agents, and in some cases, made arrests on state trespassing charges. It raises questions over the training they have to detain and transport migrants and is likely to invite legal challenges. Crossings are at or near the highest in



Texas Gov. Greg Abbott speaks during a news conference on March 10, 2022, in Weslaco, Texas.
Associated Press

about two decades. On the Texas border, U.S. authorities stopped migrants from crossing illegally 523,000

times between January and May, up from 417,000 over the same span a year ago. □

Slow pace for youngest kids getting COVID vaccine doses

By **ZEKE MILLER** and **CARLA K. JOHNSON**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nearly 300,000 children under 5 have received COVID-19 shots in the two weeks since they became available, a slower pace than for older groups. But the White House says that was expected for the eligible U.S. population of about 18 million kids.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was to publish initial data on shots for the age group later Thursday, reflecting doses administered since regulators authorized them on June 18. The first vaccinations didn't begin until several days later because the doses had to be shipped to doctors' offices and pharmacies.

U.S. officials had long predicted that the pace of vaccinating the youngest kids would be slower than for older groups. They expect most shots to take place at pediatricians' offices.

Many parents may be more comfortable getting the vaccine for their kids at their regular doctors, White House COVID-19 coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha told The Associated Press last month. He predicted the pace of vaccination would be far slower than it was for



Maria Assisi holds her daughter Mia, 4, as registered nurse Margie Rodriguez administers the first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for children 6 months through 5 years old, June 21, 2022, at Montefiore Medical Group in the Bronx borough of New York.

Associated Press

older populations.

"We're going to see vaccinations ramp up over weeks and even potentially over a couple of months," Jha said.

Officials also note there is some hesitance about the need for shots for kids who are far less likely than older age groups to develop serious illness or die from the coronavirus. Parents are being encouraged to talk to the child's doctor for trusted information about the benefits of the vaccines.

A Kaiser Family Foundation

survey conducted in April found that 1 in 5 parents of children under age 5 said they would get their child vaccinated right away once it was authorized, 38% said they would wait and see, and nearly 4 in 10 said they wouldn't get their children vaccinated at all or only if required.

More than 5 million pediatric doses have been shipped to more than 15,000 locations, the White House said, ready for parents and kids to come in. Still, the roll-out hasn't been without hiccups for some

parents of babies and toddlers, because of state restrictions on pharmacies and because some doctors are not offering the shots. Many states bar pharmacies from vaccinating children under 3 years old or require prescriptions for them to do so. In other cases, pharmacies have inadequate staff, space or training to give the shots correctly to the youngest, said Allie Jo Shipman, director of state policy for the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations. "It's just a more complex

situation than it is with your older children and adults," Shipman said.

Some doctors opted not to offer the shots because of cold storage requirements or concern about wasting doses.

The vaccine comes in multi-dose vials that must be used within 12 hours after opening.

"They don't want to see vaccine go unused," said West Virginia pediatrician Dr. Lisa Costello, who is working with her state's COVID-19 response task force. "You either need to find the number of people to vaccinate for that vial or discard the doses that are left over."

Organizing vaccine times after hours or clustering vaccine appointments are possible solutions doctors are trying, Costello said. And West Virginia has encouraged doctors to go ahead and open the vials even if they have only one patient to vaccinate, she said.

For older children, those 5 to 11 years old, vaccine coverage has varied widely from state to state, from a low of 11% of that age group fully vaccinated in Alabama to 63% in Vermont, according to an analysis of vaccination data through June 29 by the Kaiser Family Foundation. □



Lisa Holder White, center left, is sworn in as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Illinois by Justice, First District, Supreme Court of Illinois Mary Jane Theis during White's Installation Ceremony at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum Thursday July 7, 2022, in Springfield, Ill.

Associated Press

By **JOHN O'CONNOR**
AP Political Writer

SPRINGFIELD, ILL. (AP) — The first Black woman to serve on the Illinois Supreme Court

was sworn in Thursday, celebrating the event as recognition of the "undeniable value and merit" women and people of color can offer.

Holder White is state high court's 1st Black woman justice

Lisa Holder White, formerly a 4th District State Appellate Court justice, took the oath to replace the retiring Justice Rita Garman, who was the state's longest-serving active judge.

A 54-year-old Republican from Decatur, Holder White has sat on the bench for 21 years, beginning as an associate circuit judge in Macon County in 2001 with an oath administered by Garman.

In remarks at the ceremony in the Union Theater of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Holder White said that during a re-

cent visit to the museum, she viewed one of the original copies of the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared Black slaves free when Lincoln issued it in 1863.

"My heritage is a heritage that once involved minds and bodies that were shackled, and doors that were so, so long closed," Holder White said. "Taking my oath in this place today... recognizes the undeniable value and merit of what I as a Black woman... have to contribute to the work of our state's highest court.... It is a testimony to the notion that as women and people of

color, we need not limit our dreams or settle for less because when we prepare ourselves, doors will open."

Garman, 78, who first donned the jurist's black robe 48 1/2 years ago, had been expected to seek a third, 10-year term on the Supreme Court in the November election before abruptly tendering her resignation in May. By delaying her departure until after the June 28 primary election, she spared Holder White from campaigning this fall. The vacancy's future will be put to the voters at the 2024 election. □

One scandal too many: British PM Boris Johnson resigns

From Front

Months of defiance ended almost with a shrug as Johnson stood outside No. 10 Downing St. and conceded that his party wanted him gone.

"Them's the breaks," he said.

The brash, 58-year-old politician who took Britain out of the European Union and steered it through COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine was brought down by one scandal too many — this one involving his appointment of a politician who had been accused of sexual misconduct.

The messiest of prime ministers did not leave cleanly. Johnson stepped down immediately as Conservative Party leader but said he would remain as prime minister until the party chooses his successor. The timetable for that process will be announced next week. The last leadership contest took six weeks.

But many want him to go now, with some Conservative politicians expressing fear he could do mischief even as a caretaker prime minister.

"It's very difficult to see how Boris Johnson, given the character that he is, is going to be able to govern for three months in quiet humility and contrition," said George Freeman, who resigned as science minister



Prime Minister Boris Johnson enters 10 Downing Street, after reading a statement in London, Thursday, July 7, 2022.

on Thursday.

Among the possible candidates to succeed Johnson: former Health Secretary Sajid Javid, former Treasury chief Rishi Sunak, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss and Defense Secretary Ben Wallace.

About 50 Cabinet secretaries, ministers and lower-level officials quit the government over the past few days because of the latest scandal, often castigating the prime minister as lacking integrity.

The mass resignations stalled the business of some parliamentary committees because there were no ministers available to speak on the government's be-

half.

Johnson clung to power for days, defiantly telling lawmakers on Wednesday that he had a "colossal mandate" from the voters and intended to get on with the business of governing.

But he was forced to concede defeat Thursday morning after one of his closest allies, newly appointed Treasury chief Nadhim Zahawi, publicly told him to resign for the good of the country.

"In the last few days, I tried to persuade my colleagues that it would be eccentric to change governments when we're delivering so much and when we have such a vast mandate,"

Johnson said. "I regret not to have been successful in those arguments, and of course it's painful not to be able to see through so many ideas and projects myself."

He said it is "clearly now the will of the parliamentary Conservative Party that there should be a new leader of that party and therefore a new prime minister."

After Johnson's repeated ethical lapses and brushes with political ruin, many Britons reacted to news of his departure with relief and surprise, given the way he had hung on before.

"It felt like he can just keep on going and keep on ig-

noring it, so I was bit surprised this morning when saw it on my phone," Himmat Dalyway, an investment trader in his 20s, said outside an Underground station in London. "Are you still 100% sure that he is going?"

As Johnson gathered his cobbled-together Cabinet for a meeting after his resignation announcement, he promised not to rock the boat in his remaining weeks. He told members the government would not "seek to implement new policies or make major changes of direction."

It was a humiliating defeat for Johnson, who not only pulled off Brexit but was also credited with rolling out one of the world's most successful mass vaccination campaigns to combat COVID-19.

But the perpetually rumpled, shaggy-haired leader known for answering his critics with bombast and bluster was also dogged by allegations he behaved as if the rules did not apply to him.

He managed to remain in power despite accusations that he was too close to party donors, that he protected supporters from bullying and corruption allegations, and that he misled Parliament about government office parties that broke COVID-19 lockdown rules. □

Associated Press

Mexico accuses ex-president of millions in illegal funds

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's anti-money laundering agency said Thursday it has accused ex-President Enrique Peña Nieto of handling millions of dollars in possibly illegal funds, perhaps a signal from President Andrés Manuel López Obrador that he is getting serious about his promise to pursue corruption.

It marks the first formal legal accusations against Peña Nieto, despite a cloud of allegations about corruption during his 2012-2018 administration. President Andrés

Manuel López Obrador made rooting out corruption the main theme of his presidency, but hadn't yet moved against any of his predecessors.

The criminal complaint filed against Peña Nieto by the government's Financial Intelligence Unit does not mean prosecutors have yet decided to file any formal charges. But the head of the unit, Pablo Gomez, said federal prosecutors have received the complaint alleging use of illicit funds and are investigating it.

Gomez said Thursday that two companies run by Peña Nieto's family had received about \$500 million in government contracts while he was president. He did not identify the companies but said they were a sort of distribution firm, and the former president was a shareholder.

Gomez also said Peña Nieto had received money transfers from a relative, apparently linked to the two companies, for about \$1.3 million after leaving office. Gomez said Peña Ni-



Mexico's incoming President Enrique Peña Nieto of the Institutional Revolution Party (PRI) wears the presidential sash after being sworn-in at his inauguration ceremony before Congress in Mexico City, Dec. 1, 2012.

Associated Press

eto's accounts and those of the companies haven't been blocked.

Peña Nieto moved to

Spain after leaving office, and has not publicly commented on a series of accusations. □

China lashes out at US, British intelligence services

BEIJING (AP) — The United States is “the biggest threat to world peace, stability and development,” China said Thursday, continuing its sharp rhetoric in response to U.S. accusations of Chinese spying and threats to the international order. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian’s comments came a day after the head of the FBI and the leader of Britain’s domestic intelligence agency raised fresh alarms about the Chinese government, warning business leaders that Beijing is determined to steal their technology for competitive gain.

The heightened tone comes ahead of a meeting Saturday between U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations’ ministers summit in Bali, Indonesia.

“The relevant U.S. politician has been playing up the so-called China threat to smear and attack China,” Zhao told reporters at a daily briefing when asked about FBI Director Christopher Wray’s comments reaffirming longstanding



Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian gestures during a press conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing on July 6, 2022.

Associated Press

concerns in denouncing economic espionage and hacking operations by China as well as the Chinese government’s efforts to stifle dissent abroad.

“Facts have fully proven that the U.S. is the biggest threat to world peace, stability and development,” Zhao said. “We urge this U.S. official to have the right perspective, see China’s developments in an

objective and reasonable manner and stop spreading lies and stop making irresponsible remarks.”

Wray’s speech was particularly notable because it took place at MI5’s London headquarters and alongside the agency’s director general, Ken McCallum, in an intended show of Western solidarity.

“We consistently see that it’s the Chinese govern-

ment that poses the biggest long-term threat to our economic and national security, and by ‘our,’ I mean both of our nations, along with our allies in Europe and elsewhere,” Wray told attendees.

McCallum said the Chinese government and its “covert pressure across the globe” amounts to “the most game-changing challenge we face.”

Under Xi Jinping, president and head of the ruling Communist Party, China has assumed an increasingly aggressive foreign policy, joining with Russia in seeking to undermine the influence of the U.S. and its allies.

Beijing has refused to condemn Russia’s invasion of Ukraine which is expected to dominate the G-20 foreign ministers meeting while condemning Western sanctions against Moscow and accusing Washington and NATO of provoking the conflict.

At the same time, the party exercises sweeping powers over all Chinese companies and institutions, both public and private, as it seeks to dominate global markets and emerging technologies.

The Chinese government and its “covert pressure across the globe” amounts to “the most game-changing challenge we face,” McCallum said in his Wednesday remarks.

In his response, Zhao said British intelligence was “simply projecting their own dishonorable behavior onto China.” □

Extremists claim responsibility for Nigerian prison attack

By CHINEDU ASADU and MAAMOUN YOUSSEF

Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — The Islamic State group has

claimed responsibility for an attack on a prison in Nigeria’s capital which freed nearly 900 inmates including 60 of its members.

Nigerian security forces on Thursday continued to search for at least 400 escaped prisoners who are still at large.

While Nigeria has suffered multiple jailbreaks in recent years, the attack on Tuesday night was the first in the nation’s capital within that period a development that analysts say points to a “failure of intelligence.”

The Islamic State West Africa Province said in a statement that the attack on the Kuje prison was carried out in 50 minutes by three groups: One attacked the prison’s gate, another stormed the prison and the third blocked the road leading to the facility. The group said the attack is part of the Islamic State

group’s campaign to free its members from prisons.

Authorities said the extremist rebels were “very determined” and launched the daring attack on the Kuje prison with “very high-grade explosives.” They killed one prison guard and freed 879 inmates including 64 of their members whom authorities believe they had “specifically” come to rescue.

People living near the prison told The Associated Press how the neighborhood was rocked by gunfire and explosions late Tuesday night.

A worker at a nearby bakery said the explosion “shook the bakery.” The attackers “were shooting and shooting and shout-

ing ‘Allahu Akbar’ (God is greatest),” said the bakery worker who insisted on anonymity for his safety.

“More than one hour after, I saw many people leaving (the prison) and I even thought it was people that went to enjoy themselves at the bar here,” he said of the casual way the escapees walked through the streets.

Emmanuel Johny, who lives near the prison, said at the first explosion, “I knew this was a bomb and not a gun.” The Islamic State West Africa Province is an offshoot of Nigeria’s Boko Haram group which has waged an extremist insurgency against the Nigerian government for more than a decade. □



A burnt out bus is seen outside the Kuje maximum prison following a rebel attack in Kuje, Nigeria, Wednesday, July 6, 2022.

Associated Press

Local companies can provide opportunities to people with intellectual disabilities

Centro Man na Obra every day is focused on people with intellectual disabilities, so that they can advance in their lives and also achieve more inclusion in their communities, by teaching them about the labor market so that they can feel they can achieve more.

Since 1985, Centro Man na Obra is a department for adults of the Foundation for People with Intellectual Disabilities (SVGA for its name in Dutch), which is tasked mainly with giving its clients the time so they can learn aspects of a job, and this way, maybe some of them can get a permanent job in the labor market.

Elvira Tromp, who works as head of Centro Man na Obra, says that while she knows that not all her clients will manage to get a job, for those who don't manage to get an independent job they still want to show the client, their family and the entire community how even having an intellectual disability they can learn to do a job.

Centro Man na Obra has capacity for 75 clients 16 years old and up, from various nationalities including Aruban. They don't have a maximum age because as long as the client can participate with their goals, the client can come. Currently, according to Tromp they have 73 clients. There was a time when they had more than 75 clients, because they also have some clients come part-time; but that depends on the client's age and their oldest client is 83 years old.

Tromp says that they have different work groups, and then clients themselves can choose in which group they want to work. "If over time we see that they keep choosing a job that is not for them, we guide them to go in another direction. It's the same as with other young people, when they choose a study that is not right for them, over time



they grow frustrated. Here it's the same. They can choose which group they can go to learn a skill", she says.

Currently the foundation is a bit short-staffed, having only ten workers, and they have to run the entire department. "This means we don't have all the possibilities for the clients to get a job or to learn how to do a job", Tromp said.

Of the group who learns a skill, they specialize in the area of gardening, car wash, carpentry, candle making, painting objects or painting on canvas; groups who go do work outside and groups who pack products for a local company at the department's building.

"These 10 workers do all this. We have a schedule for them, where this is the program we provide and not every group works every day. Because we only have ten people, we must try to bring variety to the clients. It's the same as how school has a schedule, we also have a schedule that a certain group works a certain day", Tromp explains.

As a department, they see an improvement in the reception in the labor market compared to years ago. They have four local companies who opened their doors for the clients of Centro Man na Obra can work

in the company, and also send work to the department where the clients can complete it. There's also the possibility for the clients who can achieve more can do an internship at the company.

Even so, Tromp highlights that local companies could be a little bit more flexible in order to offer people with intellectual disabilities an opportunity to progress further in their lives.

Regarding the quality of life of their clients, Tromp says that this starts at home, with acceptance from the family. Aside from acceptance they also need the possibility to eliminate some of the overprotection, where there are families that see that there are options for the client, but they are afraid of letting them try. There are of course also benefits for the employer.

"Incentives, that if they take in a worker with an intellectual disability they could maybe get a reduction in taxes or pay less for imports, for example, to make them also more attractive. It's true that sometimes people think that by taking our clients as workers there can be a deficiency at work, but this doesn't have to mean that productivity goes down. You can adjust the workload to the person", Tromp emphasizes.

selves ask for the clients to come do an internship, and here the department goes and gives a talk and guidance to the workers on how to work with the clients and what they need to be aware of when dealing with a person with an intellectual disability.

Regarding education, Tromp explained that the challenge for people with intellectual disabilities is that there's only basic schooling available for them. There are some special schools but these are private, and not all the parents have the means to pay for such a school. This is the reason that Tromp and the department have asked the government of Aruba to come up with advanced special education, where every student who completes Dun'un Man at 16 years old can still receive an education until they are 20 years old, so that their clients can be more mature.

Finalizing, Tromp said it would be good if companies which have the need for workers think about people with intellectual disabilities, to give them a chance.

If any company wishes to get some help at work from one of their clients, like packing or pricing items, the center is open for this. □



Marines from the U.S training in Aruba

ORANJESTAD - It was previously informed that marines from the U.S will be carrying out various training exercises on the Island of Aruba. The marines have been carrying out these activities during the Caribbean Coastal Warrior 22.

U.S Marines who are part of the 2d Reconnaissance Battalion (Recon. Bn) and 2d Marine Division (MARDIV) recently came to Aruba in order to conduct different trainings along with diving activities

with the Marines at Mariniers Kazerne Savaneta also known as Korps Mariniers.

Caribbean Coastal Warrior 22 is a joint training exercise in the Caribbean involving different forces from France, U.S and other regional forces. This type of training allows the Marines to expand their knowledge and proficiency when operating in littoral and coastal regions. Caribbean Coastal Warrior increases the global interoperability between the U.S Marines,

Marine Squadron Carib and Netherlands Marine Corps.

During the training, frogmen from the Marinierskazerne also participated. Frogmen are specialized in operations and long range reconnaissance in amphibious conditions with invisibility as the greatest strength. As a scout, frogmen must be able to transmit information at any given time.

Together with the staff from Korps Mariniers, and the



frog models from the Mariniers Kazerne Savaneta, they exchanged knowledge and skills during this annual training. □



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Minister Ursell Arends of Aruba attends Ocean Conference 2022****Oranjestad - During this past week the Minister of Nature, Sr. Ursell Arends attended the United Nation's Ocean Conference 2022.**

During the week, the minister made use of the opportunity to meet with various different international representatives like national delegations of other countries and governmental organizations (NGO's).

International collaboration is on the agenda. With this in mind, meetings were had with representatives from Curacao or The Netherlands to explore the possibilities of an "ocean monitoring program" in the Dutch kingdom in order to continuously measure the water quality. This is a point in which it's particularly important to be informed at all times about the status and quality of water.

The Minister started the week highlighting the 3 goals that the delegation of Aruba has which are namely the introduction of "Rights of Nature" as a law, the introduction of a Marine Park around Aruba and the introduction of a local National Climate Resilience Council to align how Aruba will adapt to the challenges of the change of the climate. After a very successful week, the community and our visitors can have trust in the ongoing efforts to protect our nature both on land and under the sea.

Minister Ursell Arends thanked the delegation of Curacao for their beautiful gesture and representation at the Ocean Conference 2022 and wished everyone present success with their goals and projects with the recovery and salvation of the ocean. An ocean that we share with our sister Islands. □

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Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished



ST. CRUZ — The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There is numerous wildlife to discover like for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches. There are more places on the island that are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of ed-

ucational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches. A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Bubali Magic

This beautiful close-up image of the pink bird is courtesy of Michiel Oversteegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while sweeping its flattened bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates. The Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands). (Source: arikok national park)

The aforementioned is just a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile



to go beyond this and get an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental con-

sequences to flora and fauna. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it! □

Birds of Aruba

ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Birdlife Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and descriptions from the foundations

Facebook page.

The Great Egret

Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful and quite, beautiful things start happening in nature.

Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs re-



discovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

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English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male) Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannetje).

Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect. □

With love and a feeling of responsibility, Rafael established a foundation which today gives relief and support to his community

The foundation started as an initiative to bring a solution to a social problem that the youth of the area of Saba Basora Noord was experiencing. As he realized how violence was growing, he decided to get to work, and instead of remaining as part of the problem, Rafael decided to do something positive to help the kids in the neighborhood, and to save them as much as possible from the violence which abounded around them at that time.

Instead of leaving the solution in other people's hands and waiting for the kids to get help, Rafael felt the need and responsibility to help these kids. "I also have children, and once you see that the future of these kids is being lost, you think also about your own children", Rafael says, adding that he assumed this responsibility with ease. "This community, we all live in it and that means that what's positive for the neighborhood benefits all those who live in it. When you live in a safe neighborhood, you have a family who also feels safe."

The initiative brought a solution to the neighborhood, but initially it was not well received by the neighbors. However, once the residents of the neighborhood started noticing the good work and good results of the projects and activities which Rafael was executing, which caused there to be less fighting, less steal-



ing, less drugs compared to before, they started giving their support and started believing in the work Rafael was doing.

Fundacion Centro Familiar Sabana Basora – Family Center Sabana Basora Foundation – was established thanks to the feeling of responsibility that Rafael took into his own hands, to the love he feels for his neighborhood and the youth who live in it. "It is something that we ourselves didn't expect", Rafael commented. Once he started working with the neighborhood youths, he carried out a social study in order to find out the reason why the youth were getting out of hand in the neighborhood. He realized that

from the time they were very young, they were influenced by their family and their parents – "you have to remember that this is a neighborhood where you find mothers with three or four kids who don't have their fathers at home, which means the mothers alone are carrying this responsibility. It's a difficult job for a single mom." So he realized this was the root of the problem. Rafael, together with his family and neighborhood volunteers, came up with different projects in order to strengthen the existing work for the youth. At this point it was decided to engage the parents and small children as well, who also were part of the environment surrounding the youth.

This work became easy, because there was already a foundation thanks to the work that Rafael was already doing in the neighborhood, work that kept growing until it became the foundation that received acceptance from the neighborhood, from the parents, and the participation of the kids in their various activities. However, this also resulted in a lot more expenses, and more

needed to be invested in the projects they were trying to carry out. Because of this, "it got to the point that we couldn't come up with the funds like we used to at first. We had about 40 kids, maybe more, who we were providing with food, drink, almost every day we had activities for them", Rafael says.

The financial weight became bigger, and the foundation had to start knocking on the doors of other agencies that received the foundation with open arms and provided a lot of help. The financial weight became more manageable, and the help gave the opportunity to invest more in projects for the kids; at the same time it gave the foundation financial stability and strength to continue bringing new and wider-reaching projects.

The strength and financial stability helped keep an integral part of the work that the foundation does in the neighborhood. Through a social study carried out in the neighborhood, they also discovered that one of the biggest problems is the financial force of these families. "You have mothers or parents who cannot afford childcare for their kids after school, for example, or who cannot provide the support that the children need for optimal education." As an effort to solve this, and at least provide some relief to the parents, Rafael decided to carry this responsibility on the shoulders of his foundation, and made this a non-profit, meaning that the kids re-

ceive all the help for free. "This way we can facilitate and make the quality of life more flexible for our kids, and for the parents as well."

Rafael had a dream to have as many of the neighborhood kids as possible in a safe and healthy environment, where they could come after school. "A lot of times the kids would leave school, come home and there wasn't a plate of food waiting for them." A lot of times, the lack of parental control meant the kids were on the streets. This dream became a reality when the foundation was able to offer child care after school without any cost. Here the kids come after school and receive warm food, help with their homework, and they can partake in various activities after they finish their homework. "This is one of the biggest and more beautiful projects that we've been doing for more than a year", Rafael expressed.

This foundation is transmitting a beautiful message, where we can see the big help that we can give to our island, to our communities, when instead of standing aside, we all give a bit of ourselves and join our forces, so that we can bring solutions and help to our youth and our communities. "If each of us contributes and join forces to help, no matter who we are talking about, we can help our youth to grow in a healthy way, physically, socially and culturally", Rafael finished. □



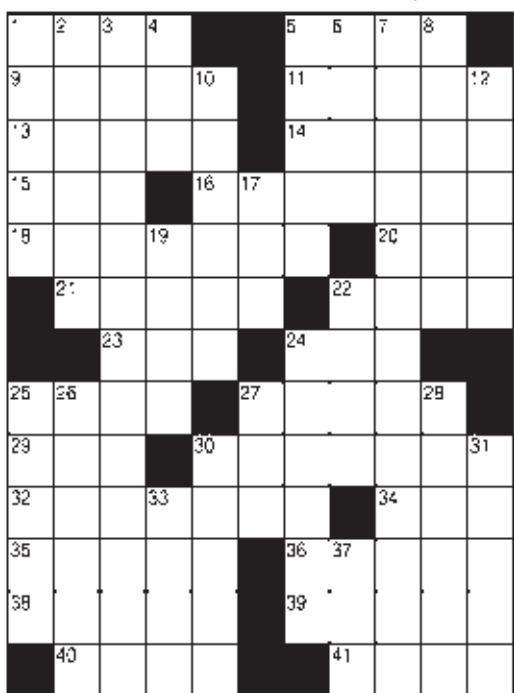
CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three U's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

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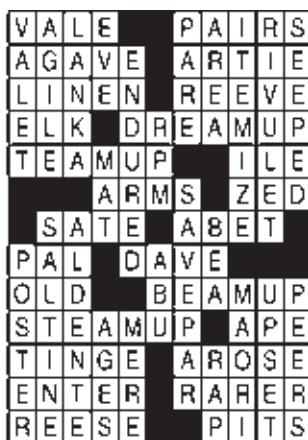
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Yesterday's Cryptoquote: DO WHAT WE CAN. SUMMER WILL HAVE ITS FLIES. — RALPH WALDO EMERSON



Yesterday's answer

With U.S. dollar nearly equal to euro, impact is being felt

By PAUL WISEMAN
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. dollar has been surging so much that it's nearly equal in value to the euro for the first time in 20 years. That trend, though, threatens to hurt American companies because their goods become more expensive for foreign buyers. If U.S. exports were to weaken as a result, so, too, would the already-slowing U.S. economy.

Yet there's a positive side for Americans, too: A stronger buck provides modest relief from runaway inflation because the vast array of goods that are imported to the U.S. from cars and computers to toys and medical equipment become less expensive. A strengthened dollar also delivers bargains to American tourists sightseeing in Europe, from Amsterdam to Athens.

The U.S. Dollar Index, which measures the value of American money against six major foreign currencies, has jumped nearly 12% this year to a two-decade high. The euro is now worth just under \$1.02.

The dollar is climbing mainly because the Federal Reserve is raising interest rates more aggressively than central banks in other countries are in its effort to cool the hottest U.S. inflation in four decades. The Fed's rate hikes cause yields on U.S. Treasuries to rise, which attracts investors seeking richer yields than they can get elsewhere in the world. This increased demand for dollar-denominated securities, in turn, boosts the dollar's value.

Also contributing to the currency's appeal, notes Rubeeela Farooqi of High Frequency Economics, is that despite concern about a potential recession in the United States, "the U.S. economy is on firmer footing compared to Europe." Not since July 15, 2002, has the euro been valued at less than one dollar. On



In this Feb. 27, 2008 file photo, euro coins and dollar bills are seen in Frankfurt, central Germany.

Associated Press

that day, the euro blew past parity with the dollar as huge U.S. trade deficits and accounting scandals on Wall Street pulled down the U.S. currency.

This year, the euro has sagged largely because of growing fears that the 19 countries that use the currency will sink into recession. The war in Ukraine has magnified oil and gas prices and punished European consumers and businesses. In particular, Russia's recent reduction in natural gas supplies has sent prices skyrocketing and raised fears of a total cutoff that could force governments to ration energy to industry to spare homes, schools and hospitals. (European leaders have denounced Moscow's move as an effort to blackmail Europe for backing Ukraine and embracing Western sanctions in the aftermath of Russia's invasion.)

Economists at Berenberg bank have calculated that at current rates of consumption the added gas bill would be 220 billion euros (\$224 billion) over 12 months, or a whopping 1.5% of annual economic output.

"This war is a 'body-blow' to Europe," Robin Brooks, chief economist at the institute of International Finance banking trade group, tweeted this week. "It undercuts Germany's

growth model that's based on cheap Russian energy. Europe is facing a seismic shift, and (the) euro needs to fall to reflect that."

A European slowdown could eventually give the European Central Bank less leeway to raise rates and moderate economic growth to address its own inflation problem. The ECB has announced that it will raise its key interest rate by a quarter-point when it meets later this month and possibly by up to a half point in September. A weaker euro feeds inflationary pressures by making imports to Europe more expensive.

Analysts at UniCredit said global recession fears were a prime driver in foreign exchange markets "amid the general view that the Fed might ultimately have more opportunity than many other central banks" to raise rates. The analysts also noted the dollar's role as a globally recognized safe haven, in light of recent financial market turmoil, as another factor that's boosting demand for the buck. In the meantime, the dollar's rise is complicating an already uncertain outlook for the United States, the world's biggest economy. On the one hand, the stronger greenback makes foreign goods less expensive for Americans and eases inflationary pressures. □

Twitter says it removes 1 million spam accounts a day

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY**
AP Technology Writer

Twitter said it removes 1 million spam accounts each day in a call with executives Thursday during a briefing that aimed to shed more light on the company's fake and bot accounts as it tussles with Elon Musk over "spam bots."

The Tesla CEO, who has offered to buy Twitter for \$44 billion, has threatened to walk away from the deal if the company can't show that less than 5% of its daily active users are automated spam accounts.

Musk has argued, without presenting evidence, that Twitter has significantly underestimated the number of these "spam bots" — automated accounts that typically promote scams and misinformation — on its service.

Twitter said on the call that the spam accounts represent well below 5% of its active user base each quarter. To calculate how many accounts are malicious spam, Twitter said it reviews "thousands of accounts" sampled at random, using both public and private data such as IP addresses, phone numbers, geolocation and how the account behaves when it is active, to determine whether an account is real.

Private data, which isn't available publicly and thus not in the data "firehose" that was given to Musk, includes IP addresses, phone



This Nov. 4, 2013, file photo shows the icon for the Twitter app on an iPhone in San Jose, Calif.

Associated Press

numbers and location. Twitter said such private data helps avoid misidentifying real accounts as spam.

Fake social media accounts have been problematic for years. Advertisers rely on the number of users provided by social media platforms to determine where they will spend money. Spam bots are also used to amplify messages and spread disinformation. But Twitter noted in the call that not all automated accounts are malicious bots. Last year, it came out with a label for automated accounts to identify what the company calls "good bots" — such as accounts that send news, health or weather updates, for instance. The problem of fake accounts is well-known to

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Twitter and its investors. The company has disclosed its bot estimates to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission for years, while also cautioning that its estimate might be too low. Last month, Twitter offered Musk access to its "firehose" of raw data on hundreds of millions of daily tweets, according to multiple reports at the time, though neither the company nor Musk confirmed this. □



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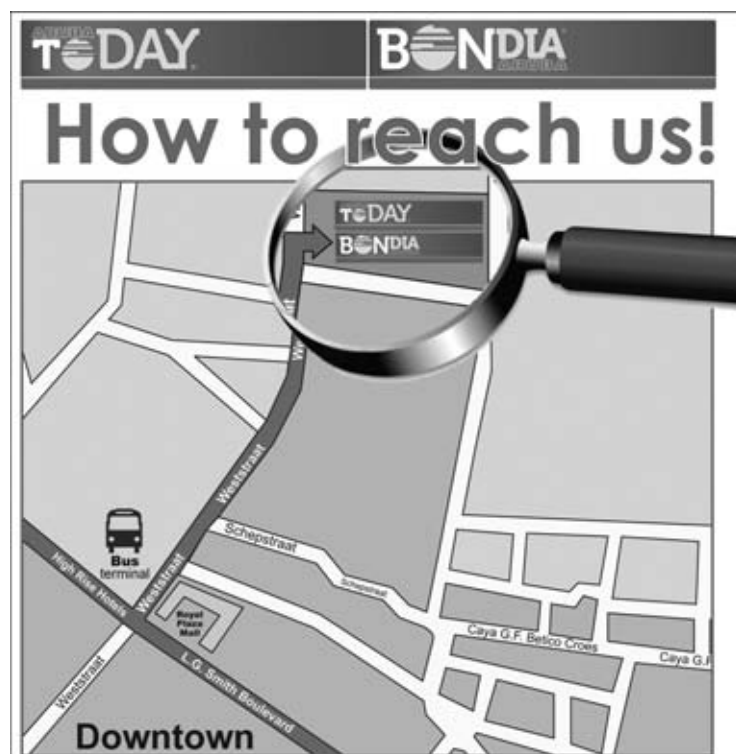
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James Caan, Oscar nominee for 'The Godfather,' dies at 82

By **LINDSEY BAHR**
AP Film Writer

James Caan, the curly-haired tough guy known to movie fans as the hotheaded Sonny Corleone of "The Godfather" and to television audiences as both the dying football player in the classic weeper "Brian's Song" and the casino boss in "Las Vegas," has died. He was 82.

His manager Matt DelPiano said he died Wednesday. No cause was given and Caan's family, who requests privacy, said that no further details would be released at this time.

Al Pacino wrote in an emailed statement that, "Jimmy was my fictional brother and my lifelong friend. It's hard to believe that he won't be in the world anymore because he was so alive and daring. A great actor, a brilliant director and my dear friend. I'm gonna miss him."

Robert De Niro also wrote that he was, "very very sad to hear about Jimmy's passing."

Many of his collaborators also wrote condolences on Twitter on Thursday.

Adam Sandler, who acted with him in "Bulletproof" and "That's My Boy" tweeted that he, "Loved him very much. Always wanted to be like him. So happy I got to know him. Never ever stopped laughing when I was around that man. His movies were best of the best."

A football player at Michigan State University and a practical joker on production sets, Caan was a grinning, handsome performer with an athlete's swagger and muscular build. He managed a long career despite drug problems, outbursts of temper and minor brushes with the law. Caan had been a favorite of Francis Ford Coppola since the 1960s, when Coppola cast him for the lead in "Rain People." He was primed for a featured role in "The Godfather" as Sonny, the No. 1 enforcer and eldest son of Mafia boss Vito Corleone.



James Caan attends the 2016 Summer TCA "Hallmark Event" on July 27, 2016, in Beverly Hills, Calif. Caan, whose roles included "The Godfather," "Brian's Song" and "Misery," died Wednesday, July 6, 2022, at age 82.

Associated Press

Sonny Corleone, a violent and reckless man who conducted many killings, met his own end in one of the most jarring movie scenes in history. Racing to find his sister's husband, Corleone stops at a toll booth that he discovers is unnervingly empty of customers. Before he can escape he is cut down by a seemingly endless fusillade of machine-gun fire. For decades after, he once said, strangers would approach him on the street and jokingly warn him to stay clear of toll roads.

Caan bonded with Brando, Robert Duvall and other cast members and made it a point to get everyone laughing during an otherwise tense production, sometimes dropping his pants and "mooning" a fellow actor or crew member. Despite Coppola's fears he had made a flop, the 1972 release was an enormous critical and commercial success and brought supporting actor Oscar nominations for Caan, Duvall and Al Pacino.

Caan was already a star on television, breaking through in the 1971 TV movie "Brian's Song," an emotional drama about Chicago Bears running back Brian

Piccolo, who had died of cancer the year before at age 26. It was among the most popular and wrenching TV movies in history and Caan and co-star Billy Dee Williams, who played Piccolo's teammate and best friend Gale Sayers, were nominated for best actor Emmys.

After "Brian's Song" and "The Godfather," he was one of Hollywood's busiest actors, appearing in "Hide in Plain Sight" (which he also directed), "Funny Lady" (opposite Barbra Streisand), "The Killer Elite" and Neil Simon's "Chapter Two," among others. He also made a brief appearance in a flashback sequence in "The Godfather, Part II."

But by the early 1980s he began to sour on films, though Michael Mann's 1981 neo-noir heist film "Thief," in which he played a professional safecracker looking for a way out, is among his most admired films.

"The fun of it was taken away," he told an interviewer in 1981. "I've done pictures where I'd rather do time. I just walked out of a picture at Paramount. I said you haven't got enough money to make me go to

work every day with a director I don't like."

He had begun to struggle with drug use and was devastated by the 1981 leukemia death of his sister, Barbara, who until then had been a guiding force in his career. For much of the 1980s he made no films, telling people he preferred to coach his son Scott's Little League games. Scott Caan also grew up to be an actor.

Short on cash, Caan was hired by Coppola for the leading role in the 1987 film "Gardens of Stone." The movie, about life at Arlington National Cemetery, proved too grim for most audiences, but it renewed Caan's acting career.

He returned to full-fledged stardom opposite Kathy Bates in "Misery" in 1990. In the film, based on Stephen King's novel, Caan is an author taken captive by an obsessed fan who breaks his ankles to keep him from leaving. Bates won an Oscar for the role.

Once again in demand, Caan starred in "For the Boys" with Bette Midler in 1991 as part of a song-and-dance team entertaining U.S. soldiers during World War II and the Korean and Vietnam wars. The following

year he played a tongue-in-cheek version of Sonny Corleone in the comedy "Honeymoon in Vegas," tricking Nicolas Cage into betting his girlfriend, Sarah Jessica Parker, in a high-stakes poker game so he can spirit her away and try to persuade her to marry him.

Other later films included "Flesh and Bone," "Bottle Rocket" and "Mickey Blue Eyes." He introduced himself to a new generation playing Walter, the workaholic, stone-faced father of Buddy's Will Ferrell in "Elf."

Caan didn't take a starring role in a TV series until 2003 but his first effort, "Las Vegas," was an immediate hit. When the series debuted, he was a casino surveillance chief dealing with cheaters and competitors of the fictional Montecito Resort and Casino.

His character rose to become boss of the Montecito but remained the tough guy who had learned judo in an undercover division of the U.S. government. Caan left the show during the fourth season and it was later canceled.

Born March 26, 1939, in New York City, Caan was the son of a kosher meat wholesaler. He was a star athlete and class president at Rhodes High School and, after attending Michigan State and Hofstra University, he studied at the Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theater under Sanford Meisner.

Following a brief stage career, he moved to Hollywood. He made his movie debut in a brief uncredited role in 1963 in Billy Wilder's "Irma La Douce," then landed a role as young thug who terrorizes Olivia de Havilland in "Lady in a Cage." He also appeared opposite John Wayne and Robert Mitchum in the 1966 Western "El Dorado" and Harrison Ford in the 1968 Western "Journey to Shiloh." Married and divorced four times, Caan had a daughter, Tara, and sons Scott, Alexander, James and Jacob. □

Injured Nadal out of Wimbledon; Kyrgios advances to final

By HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Tennis Writer

WIMBLEDON, England (AP)

— Rafael Nadal withdrew from Wimbledon because of a torn abdominal muscle on Thursday, a day before he was supposed to play Nick Kyrgios in the semifinals. It is the first time since 1931 that a man pulled out of the oldest Grand Slam tournament before a semi-final or final.

"I made my decision because I believe that I can't win two matches under these circumstances," Nadal said at a news conference at the All England Club. "I can't serve. It's not only that I can't serve at the right speed, it's that I can't do the normal movement to serve."

The 22-time major champion sighed occasionally while answering questions in English, then Spanish, for more than 20 minutes total. He twice described himself as "very sad."

Nadal said trying to continue to compete could make the injury worse.

The only other time in his career that Nadal gave a walkover to an opponent by pulling out of a Grand Slam tournament prior to a match came at the 2016 French Open, when he withdrew before the third



Spain's Rafael Nadal announces that he is withdrawing from the semi-final of the Gentlemen's Singles during a press conference at The All England Lawn Tennis Club, Wimbledon, Thursday, July 7, 2022.

round because of an injured left wrist.

The 40th-ranked Kyrgios, a 27-year-old from Australia, advanced to his first title match at a major tournament and becomes the first unseeded men's finalist at Wimbledon since Mark Philippoussis, who lost to Roger Federer in 2003.

"I hope your recovery goes well and we all hope to see you healthy soon," Kyrgios wrote in an Instagram post addressed to Nadal.

Kyrgios will meet either

three-time defending champion and No. 1 seed Novak Djokovic or No. 9 Cam Norrie of Britain for the championship on Sunday; their semifinal will be played Friday.

The second-seeded Nadal, a 36-year-old from Spain, is 19-0 in Grand Slam action in 2022, including trophies at the Australian Open in January and the French Open in June. That put him halfway to a calendar-year Grand Slam for the first time in his career. Nadal

has been bothered by a stomach muscle for about a week, and the pain became nearly unbearable in the first set of his 4-hour, 21-minute victory via fifth-set tiebreaker against Taylor Fritz in the quarterfinals on Wednesday.

After that match, Nadal said he had considered stopping before it was over — and could not be certain whether he would feel well enough to play again Friday. He wore two strips of athletic tape on his lower

stomach and took a medical timeout to take painkilling pills; his father and sister motioned from the stands for him to quit.

On Thursday's off day, Nadal went to the All England Club for a light practice session. He was signed up on the official schedule to train on one of the competition courts but did not show up there, instead opting for practice courts to which fans don't have access.

Mostly content to hit forehands and backhands, Nadal did attempt a few serves — the part of his game that revealed the most obvious inability to play with full force and, he said, caused the most discomfort against Fritz. Those practice serves Thursday were generally tapped in, by Nadal's standards, not with any of the body-torquing effort he usually uses.

"I was thinking during the whole day about the decision to make," Nadal said. It's not far from what went on with Nadal at Roland Garros, where he took repeated injections to numb the chronic pain in his left foot and insisted he had no idea when he might reach the point of not being able to take the court. □

Associated Press

Pogačar wins 6th stage of Tour and takes yellow jersey

LONGWY, France (AP)

— Tadej Pogačar is back in the yellow jersey at the Tour de France. And it's earlier than perhaps even he expected.

On the way to his wins in the 2020 and 2021 Tours, Pogačar took the yellow jersey in the mountains, but on Thursday all he needed was the modest Côte des Religieuses hill in the border town of Longwy.

Asked about the prospect of being back in yellow, which wasn't confirmed when he was speaking, Pogačar said in televised comments that for now he was focused on the stage win and "anything else is just a bonus."

After an imposing sixth stage of nearly 220 kilometers (137 miles) through Belgium and northern France — the longest of this year's Tour — Pogačar pulled away in the sprint finish on the crest of the Côte des Religieuses to take his first stage victory this year ahead of David Gaudu and Michael Matthews on Thursday.

Pogačar now leads the Tour by four seconds ahead of American rider Neilson Powless, thanks to the bonus seconds based on stage placings.

"Every time I win it's even better," Pogačar said. "We rode the last two climbs really hard, it was above our thresholds. It

was super hard for the final climb and hectic and everything. I guess I had good legs to push in the end."

Wout Van Aert was the leader heading into the stage and was the focus of attention with a breakaway, but was caught with 11 kilometers remaining. Van Aert dropped off on the hilly final section of the stage and eventually lost more than seven minutes.

Friday sees the Tour's first mountain stage and a return to a place where the UAE Team Emirates rider made his name. The 176-kilometer seventh stage runs from Tomblaine to a summit finish on La



Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar, wearing the best young rider's white jersey celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the sixth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 220 kilometers (136.7 miles) with start in Binche and finish in Longwy, France, Thursday, July 7, 2022.

Associated Press

Planche des Belles Filles, where he surged to victory to take the yellow jersey

from fellow Slovenian Primož Roglič in the penultimate stage in 2020. □

Verlander gets MLB-leading 11th win as Astros down KC 5-2

By KRISTIE RIEKEN

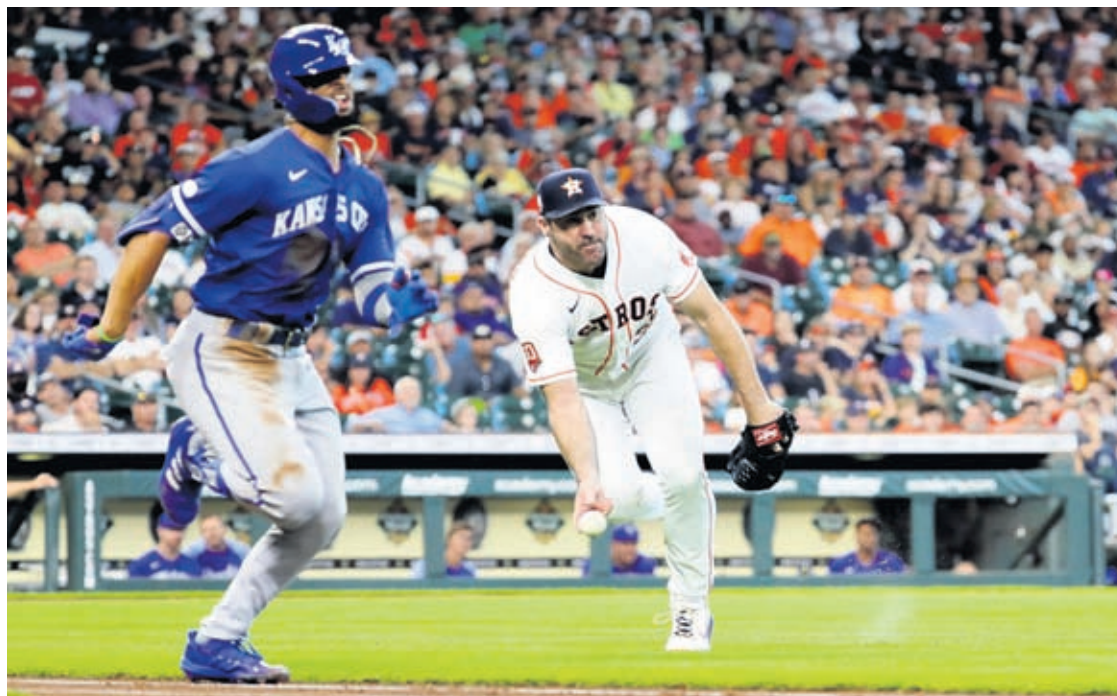
AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — In a career with so many accomplishments, Justin Verlander's success this season after missing almost two years with an elbow injury has been particularly sweet. "Of course," the Houston Astros right-hander said when asked if his stellar start means a lot to him. "Yeah, absolutely. We've talked about it a lot, just so much hard work since the surgery and it's nice to see it pay off and hopefully — knock on wood — it continues."

Verlander got his MLB-leading 11th win, Yordan Alvarez hit his 26th homer and the Astros beat the Kansas City Royals 5-2 on Thursday to take the series 3-1.

Jose Altuve added a homer and three RBIs for the Astros, who bounced back after a 7-4 loss Wednesday night that snapped an eight-game winning streak. Verlander (11-3) grinded through six innings, allowing seven hits and two runs — one earned — with eight strikeouts to lower his ERA to 2.00 in his remarkable return from Tommy John surgery. His ERA, opponent average (.190) and WHIP (0.97) all rank second in the AL.

"I had to make some pitch-



Houston Astros starting pitcher Justin Verlander, right, fields the infield grounder by Kansas City Royals designated hitter MJ Melendez, left, for the out during the fifth inning of a baseball game Thursday, July 7, 2022, in Houston.

Associated Press

es in some big spots and trust my defense behind me," he said. "Every game is not going to go perfectly without traffic. Today was one of those games where you had to grind a bit."

The Royals led 2-0 and Kris Bubic (1-6) had walked five batters but had allowed just one hit — a single by Jake Meyers in the second — when Martin Maldonado doubled with one out in the fifth.

Altuve then jumped on the first pitch, sending it into the seats in left field to tie it at

2-2.

There were two outs in the inning when Alvarez connected on his opposite-field shot to the first row in left field to put the Astros on top 3-2. His 26 home runs rank second in the AL to Yankees star Aaron Judge, who has 30.

Altuve was asked if he's impressed by what Alvarez does day after day.

"We enjoy the way he goes out there and everything he does," Altuve said. "So sometimes we get surprised, sometimes not.

We've seen good swings from him and it seems like every day he comes ready to hit the ball."

Houston added two insurance runs in the eighth on a sacrifice fly by Altuve and an RBI double by Aledmys Díaz. Ryan Pressly pitched a scoreless ninth for his 18th save.

Verlander has 24 wins against the Royals, which is his most against any team and ties him with Nolan Ryan for fourth-most in league history against Kansas City.

The Royals led early in this one just as they had in the first three games of the series.

Emmanuel Rivera and Edward Olivares hit consecutive singles to start the second. Rivera was picked off trying to steal third for the second out before a single by Nicky Lopez scored Olivares to put Kansas City up 1-0.

Olivares got things going in the fourth when he singled with no outs and made it all the way to third on the play on an error by center fielder Meyers. The Royals made it 2-0 when Olivares scored on a sacrifice fly by Kyle Isbel.

Verlander took a one-hopper hit by MJ Melendez off the leg with one out in the fifth. It didn't slow him down, as he chased the ball after it deflected off his leg and made the throw in time to beat Melendez to first.

Rivera singled to start the sixth before Verlander walked Isbel with one out. After a short visit to the mound, Verlander retired Lopez and Cam Gallagher on groundouts to preserve the lead and end his day. Bubic yielded four hits and three runs while tying a career high with six walks in 5 1/3 innings for his second straight loss. □

Mets' Bassitt says MLB should 'stop testing' for COVID-19

By DENIS P. GORMAN

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York Mets pitcher Chris Bassitt said Thursday he "probably won't" inform team and Major League Baseball officials if he feels COVID-19 symptoms in the future and that MLB should "just stop testing."

Bassitt was placed on the COVID-19 list on July 1 after complaining about sluggishness to team officials. The right-hander missed his scheduled start against Texas last Friday and only rejoined the team Thursday.

"I probably won't (again)," Bassitt said before the Mets' series opener against the Miami Marlins. "There's no way. There's no reason."

Bassitt claimed he was asymptomatic.

"Just stop testing. Stop acting like COVID is far worse than a lot of other things," he said. "I was never sick." He noted that under MLB's protocols, a positive test could mean ongoing testing that keeps an asymptomatic player out for an extended period.

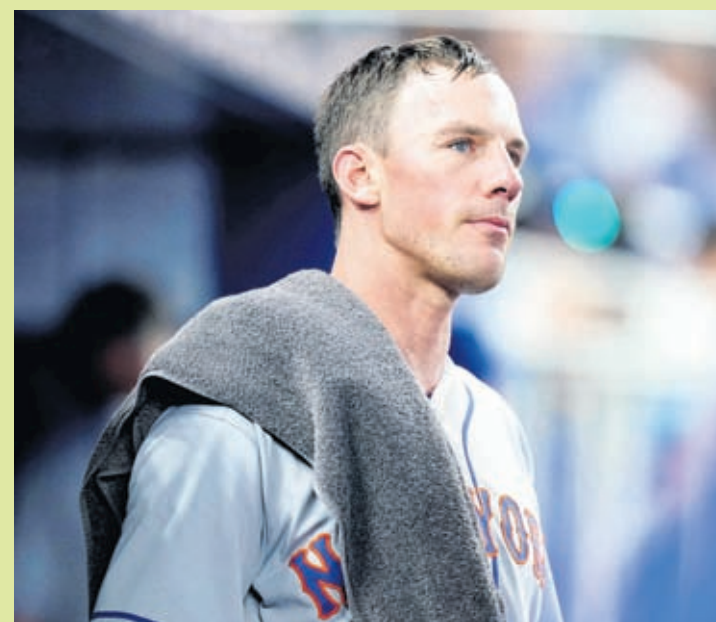
"I guess the answer is I never should have said

anything," he said.

Bassitt explained he tested himself after feeling sluggish because he has a daughter.

"If I can somewhat be safe I will. I tested myself. It was positive. So I basically had the choice to tell them so I can protect my teammates or not say anything and (put) my teammates at risk. I never had a symptom. I woke up perfectly fine the next day. Have not had a symptom since," he said.

Bassitt (6-5, 4.01 ERA), whom the Mets acquired in an offseason trade with



New York Mets starting pitcher Chris Bassitt looks out from the dugout after pitching in the fourth inning of a baseball game against the Miami Marlins, Saturday, June 25, 2022, in Miami. The Marlins scored two runs in the inning.

Associated Press

Oakland, is scheduled to start Friday. □